

## MEETING #7 – January 29

At a Joint Meeting of the Madison County Board of Supervisors and the Madison County School Board on January 29, 2015 at 5:30 p.m. in the Madison Firehouse Lounge Room located at 1223 N. Main Street:

### PRESENT:

#### School Board Members:

Mr. James L. Nelson, Jr., Chairman  
Mrs. Doreen G. Jenkins, Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Barry Penn Hollar, Board Member  
Mr. Joseph Parker, Board Member  
Mrs. Tonya D. Taylor, Board Member  
Dr. Matthew J. Eberhardt, Superintendent  
Mrs. Elizabeth M. Patterson, Clerk of the Board

#### Board of Supervisor Members:

Ms. Doris Lackey, Chairman  
Mr. Clay Jackson, Vice-Chairman  
Mr. Kevin McGhee, Board Member  
Mr. Jonathon Weakley, Board Member

### Absent:

Mr. Bill Campbell, Board Member

Chairman Lackey advised that Supervisor Campbell will be absent due to poor travel conditions in his area.

Chairman Nelson called the meeting of the Madison County School Board to order.

Chairman Lackey called the Madison County Board of Supervisors to order.

### *\*Pledge of Allegiance\**

Mr. Nelson advised of the recent passing of Mr. Floyd (Dickie Aylor), a long-time County resident and retired school employee.

### *\*Moment of silence\**

Chairman Lackey called for a motion to approve tonight's Agenda.

Supervisor Jackson moved the Board approve the Agenda as presented, seconded by Supervisor McGhee: *Ayes: Lackey, Jackson, Weakley, McGhee. Absent: Campbell. Nays: (0).*

Chairman Nelson called for a motion to approve tonight's Agenda.

Board member, Parker moved the School Board approve tonight's Agenda as presented, seconded by Board member, Taylor. *Ayes: Nelson, Penn Hollar, Jenkins, Parker, Taylor. Nays: (0).*

### **FY2016 School Budget:**

Chairman Lackey advised that during budget sessions, the Madison County Board of Supervisors has all departments/divisions to provide input regarding any additions and/or budget percentage increases, and to provide an explanation of any recommended changes.

Jim Nelson, SB Chair, advised that although the school's draft budget is subject to change, the following recommendations are included:

- A 1.5% pay increase for school personnel (State is recommending a 1% to 2% for State employees, law enforcement and teachers)
- Five percent (5%) for any healthcare increase (Anything over five percent [5%] will be the employee's responsibility)
- Request to fill one (1) full-time teaching position at Wetsel Middle School

Concerns verbalized by the Board of Supervisors:

- Were there any raises for school personnel included in last year's budget
- Initial funding increase was noted as being \$66,000.00 – figure has now increased to \$450,000.00

Dr. Eberhardt advised:

- There were no raises included in the FY2014 budget; there were a few salary adjustments included as a result of employee certifications and additional assignment of duties
- The increase of \$66,000.00 excluded all aforementioned recommendations
- The amount of new money being requested will equal \$392,741.00
- The proposed increase will equal to a 4.6% tax rate increase

- The school's total proposed budget will equal two percent (2%) (across the board increase from the last fiscal year)

Questions from the Board of Supervisors focused on:

- Whether there is any reduction in energy costs as a result of replacement windows (i.e. energy efficient windows)
- The recent reduction in fuel costs
- Whether there will be any leftover funding
- The anticipated revenue from the federal government
- Student enrollment
- Percentage that qualifies for free and/or reduced lunch
- Whether there is any savings (i.e. retiree salaries vs. salary for new hires)
- How many hours (per week) do employees need to work in order to be provided healthcare insurance
- Is there a program in place that allows school retirees to continue receiving healthcare coverage after retirement

Further responses from Dr. Eberhardt advised:

- The energy use at the high school has the lowest energy costs of all the school facilities here; cost of electricity has increased; while costs have remained stable at the high school, costs have increased at other school facilities (i.e. Waverly Yowell Elementary School, Madison Primary School)
- Fuel costs have decreased based on current prices; however, it's unsure if the current cost will remain in place; additional funding for fuel has been projected unsure if prices will remain as is; additional funding has been projected for the end of the school year
- All federal monies provided to the school system is categorical
- Any anticipated leftover funding will not be realized until about April 2015
- The County's poverty index fell slightly which may cause a slight decrease in Title I funding for the school system
- Projected funding for students with special needs is based on total enrollment
- SPED numbers will increase slightly (sixteen [16]) students being transferred to Madison County from elsewhere)
- There are currently 1,770 students enrolled here [K-12 (excluding SPED preschool and regular preschool)]
- Percentage for free and/or reduced lunch varies by school
- Based on government findings, the County's poverty level has slightly decreased (i.e. from 14.7% to 14.6%)
- All full-time personnel are eligible for healthcare coverage (including bus drivers)

Tina Weaver, Assistant Principal, noted that the County is receiving transfer students with multiple disabilities which will involve greater cost for required services.

Tina Cropp, School Finance Officer provided:

- A brief overview of how the school system prepares the budget based on staff actually in place during the actual time of budget preparations
- And further noted:
- The school system tries to balance funding
- Increases are noted in healthcare and VRS

In regards to healthcare and VRS benefits:

- Most school personnel are full-time (few part-time personnel)
- School retirees can remain on a 'retiring' healthcare plan until the age of sixty-five [65] and will be responsible to pay the premiums
- Bus drivers receive health insurance and VRS coverage (considered as full-time employees based on their work schedule of twenty [20] hours per week)
- Most cafeteria workers are full-time; the few part-time workers don't receive benefits

In regards to substitutes:

- Substitute teachers do not receive any benefits (thirty hours [30] per week)
- Substitutes working for more than ten (10) consecutive days are considered as 'long-term subs'
- Substitutes who average over thirty hours (30) during a period of time (per week), benefits must be offered
- Salary for long-term substitutes increases slightly after the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) day of service (not retroactive)

#### **CIP/Facilities Needs:**

Mr. Nelson noted the following needs:

- New Band uniforms (i.e. lease to own option)
- New bathroom fixtures at the primary school
- Student lockers (MCHS)
- Keyless Entry System (for employees at each school facility)

It was suggested the aforementioned items be added for discussion at the upcoming CIP Committee meeting, as they aren't included in the school's draft budget.

It was also noted the school's administration building does need attention; however, most of the focus has been on the school facilities at this time.

Dr. Eberhardt noted the tile in the building is outdated; abatement techniques have been implemented in order to replace floor tiles that have come undone; the original CIP didn't include work at the school board office. It was also noted the roof at the school's administration office will need to be replaced at some point.

Tonya Taylor, School Board Member, noted the initial CIP Committee's intent was to focus on maintenance issues (school and County); it's felt the focus has shifted solely on the MOU and not the grand picture; it was further suggested the list be revitalized for review and that a set amount of funding be budgeted each year for CIP items.

Discussions continued among both governing Boards regarding the:

- Existing MOU agreement (between the School System and the County)
- Specifics contained in the agreement (regarding school renovation projects)
- Suggestion that a long-range CIP Committee be established to include community representatives
- Clarification be made regarding what the community wants for the County in the future
- Identify possible funding mechanisms

Although it was recognized that funding (for the school system) must be provided by the County, it was noted that a joint CIP could combine all projects based on the framework and funding responsible.

#### **Telephone System:**

It was noted the school system is on track to implement the new phone system; a recommendation will be provided to the school board in March 2015 for review and/or approval-disapproval. If approved, the process will be underway in June 2015.

Ms. Cropp noted the school board will be asking (the County) to reappropriate any carryover funding (back to the school system) later this year in order to fund the new phone system.

#### **Miscellaneous:**

Mr. Nelson provided a brief overview of past budgeting practices that involved the County providing (the school board) with a lump sum of funding to be spent as the school board deemed appropriate. It was questioned if this process could be considered instead of the categorical funding process that's now in place. In the past, it was the understanding that any leftover funding would be re-appropriated to the school system for major maintenance issues.

Doreen Jenkins, School Board Member, noted the need to request permission (from the County) to move funding, doesn't provide the School's Finance Officer with any flexibility; the appropriation of lump sum funding would eliminate the need to attain County approval in a funding allocation is needed by the school system.

Ms. Cropp noted that departments aren't allowed to spend funding early in the fiscal year, but spending is allowed as the fiscal year progresses (spring) in order to get tasks accomplished.

Ms. Jenkins also noted categorical funding may call for spending to be done in an area that may not be the school system's greatest need; if lump sum funding was provided, it could be more accessible and allow the school system to manage funding for the school's greatest needs.

Chairman Lackey commented on past assumptions that the school system appeared to spend any leftover funding within the school's budget. It was also noted that the school system had overspent in certain budget categories by 135% and had only used 35% from other budget category line items. In looking at those numbers, it appears that implementing categorical line items would provide better budget practices and a more realistic view of each budget category.

Ms. Taylor noted that a budget is just an estimate; if a category is overspent (i.e. fuel, electricity) this actually shows that enough funding wasn't budgeted for the fiscal year.

After discussion, it was noted the Board of Supervisor is immediately taxed with overseeing the funding provided from the citizens of the County; the Madison County School Board is elected to govern the schools and to oversee County funding as best appropriate.

Chairman Lackey provided comments on a recent VACo meeting that focused on:

- Relationships between supervisors and school boards
- Ways to help both governing boards address existing problems
- Ways to gain a better understand of all points of views on issues

The localities in attendance at the workshop all reported their localities elected to move from providing categorical funding to providing 'lump sum funding' (for the school systems) and the process has been most effective – all parties have been straightforward and have worked together to accomplish the change. In closing, she verbalized she'd be in agreement with 'lump sum funding' if county schools could attain full accreditation.

It was noted the school system will host a forum in the upcoming week to focus on techniques to get testing scores up; it was also noted that all Virginia teachers have become overwhelmed with testing and the standards being put into place.

Continued discussions focused on:  
Changes to the SOL testing format

Whether issues being experienced by students could be addressed (by age range)

It was also noted that much positive information is provided by school administration during the monthly board meetings. Although it's felt that funding provided to the school system is a wise investment, there is only so much the citizens here can provide if there is a tax increase.

Emphasis was placed on the fact that teachers under the employ of Skyline CAP are also charged with education Madison's children; it was questioned if there could be some cost shifting techniques within the overall budget.

**Adjournment:**

There being no further business to come before the Board, Supervisor Jackson moved the meeting being adjourned, seconded by Supervisor McGhee. *Ayes: Lackey, Jackson, Weakley, McGhee. Absent: Campbell. Nays: (0).*

Mr. Parker motioned the meeting be adjourned – Mr. Penn Hollar seconded the motion: *Ayes: Nelson, Jenkins, Taylor, Penn Hollar, Parker. Nays: (0).*

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Doris G. Lackey, Chair  
Madison County Board of Supervisors

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Ernest C. Hoch, Clerk of the Board

Adopted on: March 9, 2015

Copies to: Doris G. Lackey, R. Clay Jackson, Jonathon Weakley, Robert Campbell,  
Kevin McGhee, V. R. Shackelford, III & Constitutional Officers